

# Confession & Repentance

Proclamation Bible Study; Week of Sunday, December 8, 2019; Steve Thiel

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God's people, who were rescued from exile and restored to the Promise Land, have fallen into sin, and the only remedy is confession and repentance. We too, as God's people, must be quick to listen to the Word, quick to own our sin, and quick to glory in grace, that we might live transformed lives!

## **I. Ezra's Response to Unfaithfulness – Read Ezra 9:1-15**

- A. Do you think that Ezra overreacted to the problem of intermarriage? How would you respond to someone who labeled Ezra's reaction as racial prejudice? How is Deuteronomy 7:1-6 helpful to this accusation?
- B. How would you describe your current orientation toward sin? How do you think you could develop the kind of hatred for sin that results in you pulling out your hair and sitting in shock and anger?
- C. Due to his awareness of the seriousness of sin, Ezra was ashamed to even look toward God (Ezra 9:6). Do you sometimes feel this way? Or do you have a tendency to excuse your behavior?
- D. Ezra moves from confession of sin to affirmation of God's faithfulness. Do you tend to wallow in despair or quickly grasp that Jesus is such a great Savior that no sin can undo the salvation He has accomplished?

## **II. Israel's Response to Unfaithfulness – Read Ezra 10:1-44**

- A. Are there people in your life who tremble at God's word and weep bitterly over sin? Why is it critical to have people like that in your life? How do you cultivate those relationships if you don't have them?
- B. What keeps you from making the kind of clean break from sin that the Israelites did when they put away the foreign women? In what ways is your fight against sin more like a cat playing with a mouse?
- C. What steps do you need to take to separate yourself from everything that will entice you to idolatry? Are you prepared to own this as your task, join others, and be strong to do it (Ezra 10:4)?

## **III. Our Response to Unfaithfulness – Application**

- A. As you think about Romans 12:2, in what areas of your life are you prone to listen to the world rather than the Word of God? How would you like to grow in being quick to apply the truth of the Bible to your life?
- B. Would the people who know you best describe you as a person who is quick to own sin or as a person who is quick to be defensive? How does meditating on the cross help you to be a more humble person?
- C. How does a growing clarity on the seriousness of sin help you to appreciate the magnificence of salvation in Christ alone and glory in God's grace all the more? Does it encourage you to serve Him?